

When the officer demanded his papers, Abdon could only produce his driver's license and Social Security number. Not good enough. At a routine commercial weigh station on a regular workday, Abdon made the mistake of not carrying his birth certificate with him. That's right, his birth certificate.

Now why did the police really pull him over? It is apparently now the law of the State of Arizona you can arrest people, citizen or not, simply for appearing Hispanic.

This is a sadly familiar story, but one that was thought to be safely in the past. In the years following the Civil War, States began to implement a series of discriminatory laws designed to control former slaves and free blacks. Under the vagrancy laws, police could stop anyone anywhere and require you to show proof of employment on demand. If you didn't, you could be arrested and your labor sold to the highest bidder.

But what if you forgot to carry your employment records with you when you left the house that morning, what if you, like so many regular citizens, were unaware of the anti-vagrancy laws? What if you were simply unemployed? Well, it might be your last mistake as a free citizen of the United States.

Sound familiar? Well, it does to Abdon, and it is for Abdon and the thousands of other Arizonians that we need immigration reform this year. We cannot solve our immigration woes by simply creating new problems. Instead, we must pass a comprehensive bill that actually fixes our immigration system that penalizes employers who would hire undocumented workers and exploit their status for their own gain. We need a bill that protects the family and repairs a bureaucratic system that forces citizens and immigrants to live apart from their loved ones. We need a bill that secures our borders and provides a clear path to citizenship and employment for otherwise law-abiding immigrants, undocumented or not.

America would not be the great Nation it is without the passion, ingenuity and perseverance of the millions of immigrants who have come to our shores looking for a better life for themselves and their families.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you, Congresswoman CHU, for your leadership on this issue. Those are very powerful words that you shared. The stories that you shared, those individuals are not alone. There are hundreds of thousands of people across our country every day who have powerful stories about what has happened to them through our immigration system.

Let me briefly mention something that the Congresswoman alluded to about detention. It could be an American citizen or somebody who is undocumented and taken to detention, that means that taxpayers are paying their way. Taxpayers are paying \$120 a day on average in these detention facilities. So if this Arizona law leads to

more undocumented people being apprehended, then we are putting them up for free at a government hotel. So rather than working and not being a burden on American society, Arizona's new law forces taxpayers to put up illegal immigrants, feed and clothe and house them at taxpayer expense.

I bet if the people of Arizona knew that, they would have second thoughts about this law. But that is exactly what will happen. Not only that, there will be American citizens who are swept up in this. You go out for coffee, run your errands, don't bring your proof of citizenship with you, boom, you're in a detention facility. American taxpayers are paying \$120 a night for you, and it might take a week, a month, however long it takes until you can get your documentation. God forbid you are visiting from Alaska, visiting from Florida, were born to a midwife and don't have a hospital birth certificate, you could be in that detention facility even though you are an American citizen for months, all at taxpayer expense.

I think the solution that the American people want is a lot better than that. I don't think that the American people want to put up illegal immigrants in hotels for months or years at a time. I think the American people want to make sure that we don't have an undocumented population in this country. That is exactly what the House conference of immigration reform bill would do, as well as the Senate proposal that was outlined. The Senate bill would require that anybody who is here has to register and have a background check and they would get a prospective immigrant status, a transitional, temporary status to be here.

And eventually if they learned English, went through all of these steps, they could become a permanent resident. But that is quite a long way down the road. And to ever achieve lawful permanent residence, they would have to speak English, have basic citizenship skills, updated terrorism, criminal history and background checks, pay all Federal income taxes, fees and civil penalties and register for selective service after 8 years on the temporary status.

No, the American people don't want to put illegal immigrants up in hotels like the Arizona legislature are proposing. The American people don't want to have a large undocumented population.

I would also like to point out the problems that this law has interposed on one of our Nation's most important strategic relationships, and that is our relationship with our neighbors to the south, Mexico. I am the founder here in the Congress of the U.S.-Mexico Friendship Caucus to facilitate one of our most important trading partners. The flow of ideas and goods between the U.S. and Mexico is an important part of the prosperity we have here, and the growing economy in helping Mexico meet the demands of its grow-

ing middle class. And yet this law is hurting our bilateral relationship with Mexico.

You know, before I got to Congress, I occasionally used to travel internationally. I had been to places like Tunisia and Egypt and Australia. And on our Department of State, there is a site where they list any country with a warning. Don't go to this country because it has a civil war or it has terrorists. My mother wouldn't have liked it very much if our own Department of State said you might die if you go there.

Well, you know what, Mexico is now advising their citizens, their tourists, not to go to Arizona. Yes, one of our very own States is being warned against visiting by a country that sends many tourists to our Nation.

I represent some of the ski resorts, Vail, Beaver Creek and Copper Mountain in Colorado. We have tens of thousands from Mexico every year. It is one of our larger countries that sends tourists that keep Americans employed and spend money in Colorado. But by criminalizing a whole status of people, any Mexican tourist would have second thoughts about going to Arizona. And it saddens me as an American, having looked at these warnings that our Department of State has and always seeing Third World developing countries, saying glad I don't live where that civil war or dictator is, well, now one of our closest and most important friends and neighbors, the great country of Mexico, has listed one of our States on their warnings.

That's a blow to the American pride. I am proud to be an American, and to think that our country has some of these problems that only developing countries or dictatorships or police states have had in the past is not only disgraceful, but it will undermine the economy of Arizona. Tourism will dry up.

And it won't be just Mexico and Arizona. I have a feeling that many other countries will follow suit from East Asia and Latin America because who wants their citizens to be apprehended and placed in detention for months at a time. And that would be a very reasonable response. I hope that this law in Arizona is tossed out as soon as possible.

Again, it is important for us to understand why Arizona passed it. It was a message, a message to us in Congress that Congress has failed the American people. Congress has failed to enforce our borders and implement real employment enforcement, real security. Indeed, Congress' lack of action is leading to the undermining of American sovereignty not only in Arizona, but in many States, including my home State of Colorado, that has hundreds of thousands of people who live extra-legally—we don't know who they are, we don't know where they are—work, in most cases, extra-legally because Federal enforcement has been a joke.